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REV. ANTHONY KOHLMANN, S. J. (1771-1824)

The name of Anthony Kohlmann occurs in Catholic historical records often enough to arouse the interest of students: in Europe at the end of the eighteenth century as one of the Fathers of the Sacred Heart, and of the Jesuits in White Russia; and later, in Rome, as professor at the Roman College, where we find among his pupils such men as Leo XIII and Cardinal Cullen. To the American student, however, the interest chiefly lies between these two periods, in his connection with events in New York and Washington in the early years of the Republic. Among his own brethren, he is in honor as one of the founders of their present organization in the United States, and to the more general student he is the link between the first and second Bishops of New York, and a pioneer Catholic educator in two cities. Still other interesting connections are with such varied personages as De Witt Clinton and Mother St. Euphrasia Pelletier, Tom Paine and Cardinal McCloskey. Coming to this country to be professor of philosophy, it is safe to say that as an administrator and a theologian, he is to be received as one whose influence and learning entitle him to a place among such men as Carroll, Cheverus, Fenwick, Maréchal and others in moulding the course of the Church in America.

He was born on July 13, 1771, at Kaysersburg, a town near Colmar in Alsace, at which latter place we are informed he made his first studies. Of his early life we have practically no details, but we do know that at one time he was a Capuchin, and upon the dispersion of that order by the Revolution in France he fled to Fribourg in Switzerland, where he was ordained in 1796. Immediately after this he joined the Society of the Fathers of the Sacred Heart, which was founded in 1794 by Tournely and de Broglie, and was composed chiefly of those who had been religious of the Society of Jesus, or pupils of the Jesuits before the suppression in 1773. He made his noviceship at Gogingen, distinguished himself for his heroic labors during a plague at Hagenbrunn in Austria, and, being later sent into Italy, spent two years in tireless activity at the military hospital at Pavia. In 1801, he was director of the Ecclesiastical Seminary at Dillingen, and later Rector of a college at Berlin and founder of one

at Amsterdam. Here he came in contact with Fr. Adam Beckers, S.J., who had just been received back into the Order by the General in Russia, and through this good man he made his own application for entrance into the Society. It was a time when the scattered Jesuits were timidly and tentatively beginning to take up the threads of the old life. The canonical existence of the Jesuits in Russia was becoming every day more manifest, and many old members were asking for readmittance. Father Kohlmann was to wait almost two years for a favorable answer and he spent the time of waiting at Kensington College, London, under Father Rozaven. At length he got word to come to Russia, and leaving England in June, 1805, arrived at Riga the 10-22 of the same month, and on June 21-July 3 was formally received as a novice at Düneburg. Here he made a year of noviceship and at the end of that time evidently more than satisfied his superiors of his fitness; for, before taking his vows he was ordered to America to teach philosophy at Georgetown.¹

In the United States at this time the Society was just beginning to take up its revived existence. The General in Russia, where it had never been disestablished, had in a brief of July 2, 1802, received permission to accept subjects in foreign lands. Accordingly, on April 25, 1803, a petition for readmittance was addressed to Bishop Carroll by sixteen men—ex-Jesuits, secular priests and student aspirants—and forwarded by the Bishop to Russia a month later. The result was that Bishop Carroll was empowered to name a Superior, which he did on June 27, 1805, in the person of Fr. Robert Molyneux. A year later the novitiate was opened at Georgetown, with ten novices and Fr. Francis Neale as Novice Master. Kohlmann, who had sailed from Hamburg on August 20, with one companion, Fr. Epinette, arrived at Baltimore on November 4, and it is a proof of the confidence he inspired that he was immediately sent to Georgetown and, while still a novice himself, made socius to the master of novices, whose duties he was soon called upon largely to take over. "With great fervor and unction," says Father McElroy in his *Recollections*, "he gave the novices frequent exhortations, which pro-

¹ These details are taken from GUIDÉE, *Notices Historiques sur quelques membres de la Société des Pères du Sacré Cœur*. Paris, 1860.

duced the most happy effects; he also introduced the customs, penances, etc., usual in the Society as he had found them in Russia.”²

At Georgetown he remained nearly two years, two very busy years, for, besides his regular duties, he appears in the Catalogue of 1807 as missionary at Alexandria, and we know from his own letters that he was sent out on short trips through Pennsylvania, rounding up the many scattered German Catholics there, and hearing confessions in English at the German Church of the Holy Trinity in Philadelphia, as Fr. Adam Britt, S.J., the pastor there, never fully mastered that language. Father Kohlmann’s stay in England had evidently taught him that tongue; he had already in 1807 preached several times in English, he says, “and every one tells me I was fully understood.” He is very enthusiastic about the good he was able to do, and says numbers of conversions were made by himself and others. On one of these journeys, in April, 1807, he started by giving a mission at Holy Trinity, Philadelphia, where he stayed two weeks, and then went on to Haycock, Goshenhoppen, Lancaster, Coleman’s Furnace Elizabethtown, Little York and Conewago, where the Jesuits had missions, and ended with a triduum at the German Church in Baltimore. In his letters he is continually dwelling on the good to be done. “Conversions are of daily occurrence,” he says, and he has the highest hopes for the future of the Church in America. “There is a great number, especially among the Methodists in the country districts, the greater part of whom would, as experience demonstrates, become Catholics, if there was anyone to point out the truth to them.”³

But it was the eve of great happenings in America, fraught with immense consequences for the Church, and destined to bring about one of the most interesting periods in Father Kohlmann’s own life. To appreciate his own place in these happenings, it is necessary to observe closely the exact sequence of events. Bishop Carroll had for some time been petitioning Rome for a division of his vast diocese, and the beginning of 1808 saw

² Carroll to Molyneux, June 27, 1805; Kohlmann to Strickland, February 23, 1807; Carroll to Plowden, January 10, 1808; cf. McELROY, *Unpublished Recollections*. (Privately printed.)

³ Kohlmann to Strickland, February 23, 1807, and March 9, 1808.

the step about to be accomplished. Bishop Concanen, O.P., the newly-elect for New York, was consecrated on April 24, and hastened to convey the good news to America. It finally came through Archbishop Troy of Dublin, on September 25 of the same year.⁴ Shortly before this, however, as Carroll says in a letter of September 25, 1809, he had sent to New York, with the approval of their Superiors, Fathers Kohlmann and Benedict Fenwick, and they took with them four scholastics, with the intention of beginning a College there. Father Kohlmann succeeded, as Rector of St. Peter's, the Rev. Matthew Byrne, who had long been desirous of resigning, so that he, too, could enter the Society. He did enter and died as a novice at St. Thomas' Manor, September 28, 1809.⁵

Father Kohlmann came to New York with the most enthusiastic hopes for the Church and his Society. He foresaw that New York would always be the first city in America, and he is all for urging his superiors to forestall events and establish the Society formally there. He was an enthusiastic Jesuit and in the existing state of things could not help being impressed with the preponderating place of his Order in the States. We can forgive him if he did not appreciate the full hierarchical development later years were to bring, and if in private letters he indulged in glowing hopes for the Society.⁶ Beyond all doubt he was a sincere and generous hearted man, solely desirous of spreading Christ's religion, wherever he might be. He was well received at St. Peter's, the trustees laying out \$800 for the repair of the house, though, he says, before his arrival they had not spent one cent on it. What he took in his humility as a token of regard for his Order, may perhaps also be ascribed to the genial tact and magnetism of the man himself. He had two tasks before him: to tend to his congregation—and, after his appointment as Vicar General, to organize the diocese—to secure the education of youth, his chief purpose in coming, and a prime object of the Society itself. He lost no time in setting about both. On October 11, Bishop Carroll had received word from Bishop Con-

⁴ *Cath. Hist. Review*, Vol. ii, p. 27.

⁵ McELROY, *ut supra*.

⁶ Cf. Kohlmann to Strickland, November 7, 1808; September 14, 1810; November 28, 1810.

canen to appoint someone as Vicar General "with all the necessary powers that you and I can delegate to him."⁷ As Father Kohlmann was already on the scene and perfect confidence was had in his ability and prudence, he received the appointment and found himself at the head of a large diocese that took in New York State and the northern end of New Jersey. He does not seem, however, to have received any power to administer confirmation, as Father Nerinckx had, for we find Cheverus of Boston performing that office as late as 1814. Bayley testifies to seeing his name as Vicar General on documents in Quebec⁸ and he actually did appoint Bishop Plessis his Vicar for subjects of the diocese near the border, being in turn made the same by that prelate for a like purpose.⁹

In a letter written that November he gives some idea of the work that lay before him.¹⁰ "The congregation chiefly consists of Irish, some hundreds of French and as many Germans, in all, according to the common estimation, of 14,000 souls." "The parish," he later said, "was so neglected in every respect, that it goes beyond all conception."¹¹ He saw immediately that one church was not sufficient, and with characteristic energy set about building another, large and splendid enough to be the Cathedral of his Bishop, who was in Italy anxiously awaiting a chance to cross the ocean, a chance denied by Napoleon's officials. Accordingly Kohlmann bought a large tract of unoccupied land on Canal Street between Broadway and the Bowery, and with the cooperation of his trustees, but not without pessimistic prophecies from many people, carried it through to completion. It was to be for those Catholics who had settled "outside the city," and was in the country amid the villas of the rich and the scattered farmhouses thereabouts. Woodlands and meadows surrounded it, and "so very close to the wilderness [was it] that foxes were frequent visitors." The pro-

⁷ Concanen to Carroll, July 26, 1808, in *Cath. Hist. Review*, Vol. ii, p. 32.

⁸ Kohlmann to Strickland, November 7, 1808.

⁹ On the canonical aspect of this office, and the objections of the General, S.J., to his holding it, and of Carroll to his giving it up, cf. HUGHES, S.J., *Hist. of S.J. in N. A.*, Documents, pp. 865 note, and 857.

¹⁰ Kohlmann to Strickland, November 28, 1808.

¹¹ DE COURCY, p. 366.

ject succeeded so well that on June 8 of the following year Kohlmann laid the cornerstone. According to a current account, "The Rector, with the assistant clergy, choir and the board of trustees, walked in solemn procession to the ground, where was delivered a suitable discourse, . . . and the ceremonies were concluded amidst a large and respectable assemblage of citizens, exceeding 3,000."¹²

Meanwhile the Fathers were not neglecting any means to raise the spiritual condition of their flock. On December 29, 1808, Kohlmann wrote to the Archbishop: "The whole day, from early in the morning till the evening, is occupied, either in hearing confessions till eleven o'clock, or calls for the sick, superintendence over the common schools, instructions, collecting money for the sick or for the embellishing of the church, etc." His unselfish exertions did not go unrewarded, for shortly afterwards he was able to record: "The communion rail daily filled, though deserted before; general confessions every day . . . three sermons, in English, French and German, every Sunday, instead of the single one in English; three catechism classes every Sunday, instead of one; Protestants every day instructed and received into the Church; sick persons attended with cheerfulness at the first call, and ordinarily such as stand in need of general confession and instruction; application made at all houses to raise a subscription for the poor, by which means \$3,000 have been collected, to be paid constantly every year." This generosity of the Catholic faithful shows itself early in a people who, since that time, though never wealthy, have so magnificently given money to forward the glory of God and the welfare of his poor. That Kohlmann's influence and work were predominantly in the spiritual order, and resulted in a universal renewal of piety, is proved by two letters of Bishop Carroll, wherein he was able to say: "Incalculable good is done there," and again on September 19, 1809, "They have already produced most happy fruits by introducing exercises of piety, sodalities, establishing an extensive Academy."¹³

¹² BAYLEY, *Hist. of Cath. Church in N. Y.*, p. 73; FARLEY, *Hist. of St. Patrick's Cathedral*, pp. 49-50. New York, 1908.

¹³ Carroll to ————(?), September 5, 1809; to Plowden, England, September 19, 1809.

This Academy was not the first the Jesuits had opened in New York. As far back as 1685, Colonel Dongan, Catholic Governor of the Province, had sent to Europe for some English Jesuits to convert the Iroquois to Christianity, since he was opposed, on national grounds, to using the zealous French missionaries for that purpose. These fathers are mentioned in the Roman catalogue as residing in New York at this time; they are probably those who responded to the Governor's call—Fathers Thomas Harvey, Henry Harrison and Charles Gage. Being unacquainted with the Iroquois dialects, they proceeded no farther than New York, but profited by their stay in that city to open a college, which was called the New York Latin School and was situated upon what are now the grounds of Trinity Church. Their stay was brief and all but fruitless, owing to the small number of Catholics and the untiring bigotry of Leisler, the usurping Protestant Lieutenant Governor of New York.¹⁴ Father Kohlmann started under more favorable circumstances. He began by renting a house in Mulberry Street fronting the ground on which he was building the Cathedral, and here, with the help of his four scholastics, he opened up his school. One of the professors was James Wallace, S.J., reputed the best astronomer of his day in this country, who later became famous by winning the prize offered by the French Government for solving a mathematical problem offered in open competition. Mr. White, S.J., was professor of Latin and Greek. When Kohlmann wrote to the Archbishop after the Christmas of 1808, he already had seventeen pupils. The school soon showed signs of outgrowing its quarters, as in the following July the pastor wrote: "It now consists of about thirty-five of the most respectable children of the city, Catholic as well as Protestant. Four are boarding at our house, and in all probability we shall have seven or eight boarders next August."¹⁵ That September, however, he moved it around to Broadway, and in March, 1810, a new site was secured "far out into the country," on which was a building, to which additions were made. The land was bought in three lots by his two friends, Andrew Morris and Cornelius Heeney, for the sum

¹⁴ O'CALLAGHAN, *Documentary Hist. of New York State*, Vol. ii, p. 14. SHEA, *Catholic Churches of New York City*, p. 25.

¹⁵ DE COURCY, p. 367.

of \$11,000, and they kept the title to it in their own hands.¹⁶ This site, the "most healthy and delightful spot of the whole island," and from which both rivers could be seen, was just opposite the old Elgin Botanic Garden,¹⁷ at what is now Fifth Avenue and Fiftieth Street, the location of the present St. Patrick's Cathedral.

In its new country situation it began really to have the success hoped for by its founder. He continued to direct his two parishes from his house on Mulberry Street, and made Father Fenwick head of the College, while he came out once a week to hear confessions and to attend to other affairs. Father Fenwick was of an old Maryland family, descended from Cuthbert Fenwick, and later was Administrator of Charleston and Bishop of Boston. No means was neglected to enhance the reputation of the school, as for instance the public examination held in September, 1810, which was advertised in the papers and drew a "respectable audience of ladies and gentlemen." Friendly relations were established with Columbia College, and they were invited to the latter's annual commencement in that same year.¹⁸ Among the students of the school was a son of the late Governor Livingston, and one of Governor Tompkins, later Vice-President of the United States. In the first eight months it received thirty-six pupils and later the attendance rose to nearly one hundred.

This same year, 1810, word came to New York of the death of its good Bishop, whom his subjects had never seen. Not in good health when he was named, his constant worries and disappointments wore him out, and just in sight of embarking for America, he was again turned back by Napoleon's agents, and died, one might almost say of a broken heart, at Naples, Italy, on June 19, 1810, a pathetic picture of unfulfilled longings and deferred hopes.¹⁹ To the end he showed the most lively interest in the welfare of his diocese, and his memory was fittingly celebrated by Father Kohlmann in a solemn High Mass at St. Peter's. The

¹⁶ HUGHES, *Documents*, p. 357: Marshall, S.J., to the General, S.J., March 5, 1821.

¹⁷ *Historical Records and Studies*, Vol. iv, p. 332 ff.

¹⁸ Kohlmann to Strickland, September 14 and November 28, 1810.

¹⁹ *Cath. Hist. Review*, Vol. ii, p. 43.

trustees, he tells us,²⁰ spared no expense on the occasion and the church was imposingly decorated. Father Fenwick preached the funeral sermon on the episcopal dignity "to an audience so numerous as has scarce ever been seen before in any church. . . . I am informed that no solemnity performed in our church made ever so blessed an impression on those who were present." Efforts were made to induce Kohlmann to accept the mitre as his successor, but the humble religious always refused.²¹

A striking incident in which Kohlmann figured was his presence at the deathbed of the atheist Tom Paine, in 1809. In a vivid account left by Father Fenwick,²² who accompanied him, we are told that the wretched man had called for a priest, but only, as they were to discover, because he imagined they could work some good for his body. Fenwick says they agreed beforehand as to what line to take with him, but when he found out the real reason for their visit, the salvation of his soul, his rage was so great that he carried on like a man really possessed. Threats and appeals alternately did no good, and in the midst of the most awful blasphemies, they were compelled to leave him to the mercy of God.

A much more successful effort was his action in the famous confession trial in New York in 1813. A Catholic named James Keating had accused a certain Philipps and his wife of receiving goods stolen from himself, and later, suspicion of the theft fell upon two negroes. Before the trial came off, however, Keating announced he had recovered his goods and, upon being questioned, replied that restitution had been made through Father Kohlmann. The latter, thereupon, was subpoenaed to give his witness, but respectfully refused to give the name of the culprit, as he had the knowledge only under the seal of confession. The trial came off, however, this time at the request of St. Peter's trustees, so that the point might be determined. It aroused immense interest, and again Father Kohlmann refused to give witness. Two Protestants, Messrs. Riker and Sampson, had volunteered to be his counsel, and they argued his case with great ability. The judges were De Witt Clinton, the mayor;

²⁰ Kohlmann to Carroll, October 12, 1810.

²¹ *Catholic Almanac*, 1856, p. 49.

²² *U. S. Cath. Mag.*, Vol. v, p. 558.

Josiah Ogden Hoffmann, recorder, and Richard Cunningham and Isaac Douglass as aldermen. The mayor gave the decision. It was a lengthy and full statement of the case for religious liberty and on these grounds and those of the rules for evidence, excused Kohlmann from giving witness where his religion forbade it, and where he would be exposed to infamy, and, in his own conviction, to punishment in a future state. As Bayley remarks, things had come a long way from the bigotry and prejudice of pre-Revolution days.²³ The case had a twofold outcome. One was a law passed in Albany, December 10, 1828, ensuring ministers and priests freedom from disclosing matters known only in a professional capacity, when such silence is imposed by their denomination. The other was a book by Father Kohlmann himself, in which he took advantage of the intense interest aroused, to enlighten non-Catholics on the matter in question, and state convincingly the Church's doctrine on the Sacrament of Penance. It appeared as an appendix to a review of the whole case by William Sampson, Esq., called "The Catholic Question in America."²⁴ It is a complete theological treatise on the sacrament, and is in high regard for its clearness and completeness.

In a letter written in 1810,²⁵ Kohlmann had stated his plans for the advancement of religion in the Diocese—a school for boys, a convent for girls, and an orphan home conducted by nuns. The first he had already established, and for the second he secured through Father Betagh, S.J., of Dublin, a few Ursulines, who came in April, 1812, and settled on Fiftieth Street near Third Avenue. But since they came only on condition of receiving novices within three years, at the end of that time they returned to Ireland.²⁶ Their chaplains during that period were the Trappist Fathers, who, driven by persecution from France, had finally come to New York. A community of Trappist nuns also came with them, and fulfilled for a time Kohlmann's third requirement. At one time they had thirty-one children under their care. In October, 1814, however, all monks and sisters embarked for Havre, as it seems the superior, Dom Augustine,

²³ BAYLEY, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

²⁴ Printed in New York, by Edward Gillespy, 1813.

²⁵ Kohlmann to Strickland. November 28, 1810.

²⁶ DE COURCY, pp. 377-380; BAYLEY, p. 82ff.

had never really given up the intention of finally resettling in France.

In 1814 Kohlmann's stay in New York was drawing to a close. That it was a fruitful one we cannot doubt. The new Cathedral due to him was completed, but was only consecrated after he left, on May 14, 1815. Prejudice and bigotry had been allayed, and the Catholic religion was more favorably known to outsiders, while the spiritual level of the flock itself was perceptibly raised, and he had won high praise from Bishops Carroll and Cheverus.²⁷ But one by one the high hopes with which he had come to New York seem to have vanished. The Cathedral was long in building; though three more priests, among them his own brother Paul, had joined him in 1812, the school seemed destined to fail through lack of teachers of the Society; no bishop had come to take over the administration of the vast diocese, and the Society itself was in an anomalous position. It was not until its world-wide restoration on August 7, 1814, that the American Jesuits were able to show to Bishop Carroll the proofs of that complete independent canonical existence that he demanded. The delay greatly hampered their expansion, and if they were to exist at all, it became increasingly evident that they must adopt a cautious policy, or take on a factitious extension outside their rules which Carroll agreed with them they were prudent not to do.²⁸ Father John Grassi, the Superior, writing to Kohlmann, told him that Maréchal, who, it was supposed, was to be the next Bishop, agreed that the New York School was become an *onus insupportabile*, and in this Carroll, while praising what Kohlmann had done, concurred.²⁹ Accordingly, after further consultation with his own advisers, he recalled the teachers to help build up what could be made certain and safe, the College at Georgetown. This was in September, 1813, and the building on Fifth Avenue was loaned to the Trappists, leaving on it, with the Jesuits, a debt of honor of \$10,000, which they paid with difficulty later. It had an interesting subsequent history told in

²⁷ Cheverus, Boston, to Plessis, Quebec, January 20, 1811.

²⁸ Carroll to Plowden, England, December 12, 1813.

²⁹ DE COURCY, pp. 368-9; Carroll, in note 28. Grassi, writing in 1818, says it was closed "solely for want of teachers," *Notizie Varie sullo Stato della Repubblica degli Stati Uniti*, Milan, 1819.

Cardinal Farley's *History of St. Patrick's Cathedral*. It was sold by the Jesuits on February 27, 1821, for \$1,800.³⁰

The uncertain state of affairs as to New York and the problematic good he might still do there, influenced the recall of Father Kohlmann himself to important work in Maryland. The second phase of his life in America was over and the third began. He left New York in January, 1815, and was immediately made Master of Novices at White Marsh. The externally uneventful life he led here was soon rudely broken by the death of the venerable Archbishop on December 3, 1815. Both he and Grassi were present at that saintly deathbed. Almost the good prelate's last words, as reported by Grassi,³¹ were: "There is one thing more than any other gives me consolation at this moment, and that is that I have placed my Archdiocese under the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary." In the summer of 1817 Grassi went to Rome, and never returned. His natural successor was Kohlmann, and his appointment dates from September 10, 1817. He immediately removed to Georgetown, taking also the post of Rector of that College. The Luther Tercentenary was being celebrated about this time, and Kohlmann entered the lists with two important pamphlets on the heresiarch, the second a species of dialogue with a Lutheran pastor of Pennsylvania, wherein he refutes all modern pretensions in Luther's own words, quoting book and page.³² A little later a new project was under way in Washington. A building erected for a novitiate on F Street near 10th, was made instead a theologate, and on August 15, 1820, Kohlmann moved in as Rector and Professor of Dogma, with Fr. Maximilian Rantzaus as Professor of Moral, and eight theologians. Some prominent Catholics were soon attracted by the institution, and begged Kohlmann to open its halls to the boys of the city. This was done, and on September 1, 1821, it was started as a day-school. "Directed by the ability and experi-

³⁰ HUGHES, *Documents*, pp. 357, 897. It was Marshall who, as procurator of the mission, sold the property. Marshall to General, S.J., March 5, 1821.

³¹ McELROY, *Recollections*.

³² "The Lutheran Centennial Jubilee" and "The Blessed Reformation, Martin Luther portrayed by himself, etc.," Philadelphia, Bernard Dornin, 1818. 94 pp. Finotti, p. 185, says that the author's name "John Beschter" is a pseudonym for Kohlmann.

ence of Father Kohlmann, Gonzaga College [as it was later known] soon became the leading school in Washington." The classes—three that year, nine the next—were taught by the theologians. It was while here that he met Mrs. Ann Mattingly,³³ sister of Thomas Carbery, Mayor of Washington, and persuaded her to make the novena in union with the prayers of Prince Hohenlohe, that resulted on March 10, 1824, in her complete restoration to health. Here, too, he wrote and published his famous treatise on Unitarianism.³⁴ Jared Sparks, then of the Unitarian Church in Baltimore, in an effort to transplant his doctrines from New England to that city, was editing *The Unitarian Miscellany*, and to offset the effect of this Kohlmann launched a series of pamphlets, thirteen in number, in which he attacks that system with a wealth of patristic and scriptural learning, brilliant theological reasoning, and many moral and psychological arguments, calculated to persuade as well as to convince, and at the same time treats his adversary with uniform courtesy, patience and firmness. It had a real success, and by 1822 the third edition in book form had appeared. Father McElroy is authority for saying that for years the book was read in the refectory of St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore.

This book was probably indirectly the cause for his leaving America. Pope Leo XII, on May 17, 1824, restored to the Jesuits the Roman College, which they had lost at the Suppression, and eminent theologians were called in from all parts of the world to make this college once more a great seat of learning and one of service to the entire world. Father Kohlmann was one of these, and for five years he taught dogma there, associating with such men as Taparelli, Perrone and Patrizi, and having for pupils the future Leo XIII and the future Cardinal Cullen. It was while objecting at a public defense by the latter that he attracted the attention of the Pope, who soon made him a consultant of the Congregations of Ecclesiastical Affairs and of Bishops and Regulars. Later on, by Gregory XVI, he was made Qualificator of the Inquisition, and the same Pope is said to have

³³ *U. S. Cath. Miscellany*, Charleston, 1824, pp. 351, 361, 375, 387, 403; a fully documented account of the miracle.

³⁴ *Unitarianism, Philosophically and Theologically Examined*, Washington City, Henry Guegan, 1821, two volumes, pp. 296 and 265.

wished to make him a Cardinal. In 1830, he retired from his office and became spiritual father at the Roman College, and the next year retired to the professed house of the Gesù, where he was destined to end his days, and where, in addition to his work on the Congregations, he gave himself up freely to the confessional and the apostolate. He enjoyed a high reputation as a spiritual director, his wide knowledge of languages undoubtedly attracting to him many young men from many lands, among whom was Father John McCloskey, the future Cardinal.³⁵ He always enjoyed also a peculiar ascendancy over the minds of those outside the Church, and one conversion of this period that caused a sensation was that of Augustine Theiner, the historian, who has himself graphically related the event in the preface of one of his works.³⁶ A first visit reluctantly made completely won him over, and after a few more he was entirely satisfied, and returned, after many wanderings, to the Church, on April 3, 1833. Among his own brethren, Father Kohlmann's last years were the cause of much edification, the fruit of a holy life well spent in single hearted labor for religion wherever obedience called him—a typical apostle of those days, learned and indefatigable, with much personal charm that won him many victories, and, besides, a decided gift for government. It was the labor of his last Lent that killed him. Though already stricken with inflammation of the lungs, he persisted in the confessional on April 8, 1836, for several hours.³⁷ Two days later, in the most pious Christian sentiments of resignation he breathed his last.³⁸

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³⁵ McCloskey, Rome, to Dr. Power, V.G., New York, April 15, 1836; *Hist. Rec. and Studies*, Vol. ii, p. 278.

³⁶ *Histoire des Institutions d'Education Ecclésiastique*, i, Intro.

³⁷ *Catholic Almanac*, 1872, p. 80.

³⁸ For Cardinal McCloskey's account of the death of Father Kohlman, cf., CARDINAL FARLEY, *Life of John Cardinal McCloskey*, pp. 110-112. New York, 1918.